

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2776

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 6142

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR UR US XF

SUBJECT: SOVIETS AND THE PEACE PROCESS

REF: (A) STATE 93454 (NOTAL, (B) MOSCOW 5586

1. DURING GENERAL DISCUSSION ON MIDDLE EAST APRIL 19, USA AND CANADA INSTITUTE MIDDLE EAST SECTION CHIEF ALEKSANDR KISLOV MADE A SPECIAL POINT OF THE NEED FOR SOME SORT OF JOINT US-SOVIET CONSULTATIONS ON HOW TO MOVE THE SETTLEMENT PROCESS FORWARD. HIS ARGUMENT--THAT IN THE PAST, PROGRESS TOWARD PEACE HAS BEEN MADE ONLY WHEN THE US AND USSR ACTED TOGETHER, OR AT LEAST NOT AGAINST EACH OTHER, AS IN 1956 AND 1973--WAS FAMILIAR, AND HE NOTED THAT TO BEST OF HIS UNDERSTANDING PRE-MEPC BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS ACCEPTED IN PRINCIPLE BY SOVIETS IN NOVEMBER 1975 HAD NOT TAKEN PLACE. BUT THE POINT ITSELF WAS UNSOLICITED AND REPEATED TWICE IN COURSE OF HOUR-LONG CONVERSATION (WITH ACTING POL COUNSELOR).

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WM AS IF TO REINFORCE ARGUMENT THAT US-SOVIET TALKS WERE ONLY WAY FORWARD, KISLOV DISMISSED UTILITY OF UN AS A FORUM WHERE TOO MANY PARTIES, INCLUDING PRC, ARE INVOLVED, AND READILY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT NONE OF THE IMMEDIATELY INTERESTED PARTIES HELD MUCH REGARD FOR A RECONVENED GENEVA MEPC. INDEED, HE HAD NO CONCRETE PROPOSALS TO OFFER.

3. ARAB COLLEAGUES WITH WHOM WE HAVE TALKED IN THE PAST WEEK OR SO HAVE GIVEN NO INDICATION THAT THEY HAVE HEARD OF ANY SOVIET ME INITIATIVE IN THE WORKS. THE GENERAL FEELING AMONG THIS GROUP IS THAT NEGOTIATIONS ARE FROZEN UNTIL AFTER THE US ELECTIONS.

4. COMMENT: KISLOV IS LESS AUTHORITATIVE THAN TARASENKO (REF A) AND IT IS WORTH NOTING THAT HIS THRUST--TOWARD US-SOVIET BILATERALS, AND NOT TOWARD THE UN--IS DIFFERENT FROM TARASENKO'S. KISLOV HAS SHOWN HIMSELF TO BE CAREFUL AND WELL-INFORMED IN THE PAST, HOWEVER, AND COMMON ELEMENT IN BOTH PRESENTATIONS IS NOTE OF SOVIET DESIRE SOMEHOW TO GET BACK IN THE MIDDLE EAST GAME. COUPLED WITH PYRLIN'S CAUTIOUSLY POSITIVE COMMENTS (REF B), KISLOV'S REMARKS WOULD LEAD US NOT TO EXCLUDE POSSIBILITY THAT SOME SORT OF SOVIET INITIATIVE MAY BE IN INITIAL STAGES OF CONSIDERATION, EVEN IF IT HAS NOT YET JELLED.
STOESSEL

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